

**2019 Annual Report  
South Middlesex Regional  
Vocational Technical School  
Committee  
(Keefe Regional Technical School)**

This annual report is prepared by Superintendent /Director, Jonathan Evans, and composed on behalf of the members of the School Committee of the **South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District** and submitted after review and approval by the full Committee in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement among the City of Framingham and Towns of Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton and Natick.

This report reviews from the perspective of the Committee the principle items with which the Committee was concerned during the year. It is a representative account of matters solely within the policy making authority of the Committee and also of matters which the Superintendent/Director brought before the Committee for information and consultation. For greater detail and discussion the reader should read the extended minutes of Committee meetings and the attachments thereto which are available at the school office.

In addition to a public high school, the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District provides continuing education opportunities for adults through the Keefe at Night program as well as Summer Discover, a summer program for area youth.

The Committee reorganized on June 17, 2019 with officers elected unanimously to the following positions:

**Chair:** Edward Burman (Ashland)

**Vice-Chair:** Sarah Commerford  
(Holliston)

**Secretary:** A.J. Mulvey (Framingham)

**Assistant Treasurer:** Barry Sims  
(Holliston)

Staff members working on behalf of the District and School Committee are Karen Ward, **Recording Secretary** and Jack Keating, **Treasurer**.

The balance of this report presents a summary of the discussions and actions of the Committee on a number of the important matters brought before the Committee for advice or action.

### **Community Engagement**

Staff and students of Keefe Regional Technical School participated in many community projects throughout the school district member municipalities. Examples of these activities include:

#### **Carpentry**

Natick House Project – Installed flooring and finish materials for the Natick Affordable Housing Trust

Framingham School for the Deaf – Built cube chairs

#### **Cosmetology**

Callahan Senior Center – Provided complimentary manicures

Hopkinton Senior Center – Provided complimentary manicures

#### **Culinary Arts**

Natick Community Farm – Provided support for the Harvest Dinner Fundraiser

Jewels of Framingham – Provided pastries to celebrate the residents of Framingham over the age of 90

Taste of MetroWest

Family Promise Natick – Provided fundraiser support

### **Design and Visual Communications**

Framingham Pride Flag Raising – Provided face painting services  
Natick Community Senior Center – Created signs  
Framingham Holiday Celebration – Provided face painting services

### **Early Childhood Education**

SMOC Framingham – Volunteer hours

### **Electrical**

Natick House Project – Completed finish wiring and inspection for the Natick Affordable Housing Trust  
Habitat for Humanity – Project wiring for a home renovation on Concord Street in Holliston  
Framingham Parks and Recreation – Maintenance building door sensors, Scoreboard repair Dudley Road, Parking lot light repairs Cushing Park, Irving Street Park underground service

### **Graphic Communications**

Holliston Police – School safety stickers  
Town of Ashland – Business cards  
Family Promise Natick – Flyers and tri-fold brochure, banners, ID signs, certificates, note pads, posters and programs  
Framingham Police – Court envelopes

### **Health Assisting**

MetroWest Blood Drive – Staffed the spring and fall blood drive  
Alzheimer's Walk  
Sages and Seekers program  
Jewels of Framingham – Volunteer service  
Framingham Annual Health Fair – Volunteer service  
Pearl Street Cupboard - Volunteers

### **Horticulture**

Natick Community Organic Farm – Crop production assistance and maple sugaring  
Pearl Street Food Pantry – Donations of produce and floral designs

Framingham Parks and Recreation Department and Department of Public Works – Arbor Day tree planting, other planting operations, and cemetery maintenance  
Massachusetts Horticultural Society – Grounds maintenance and improvement project

In May 2019, Keefe Regional Technical School hosted a breakfast for the Community Based Justice Program (CBJ) that included Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan, Probation Officers, School Officials and area Police Department Representatives.

It should also be noted that all five district municipalities' high school's swimming teams practice and compete at the Keefe Regional Technical swimming pool. The pool is also used by the Framingham Park and Recreation Departments.

### **Administration**

In 2019, Jonathan Evans completed his sixth year in the role of Superintendent Director, with 24 years of service to the district.

The School Committee adopted goals for the Superintendent's performance evaluation period from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The goals adopted related to the following: Services for Growing English Language Learner Population, Build Stronger Connection to Alumni, Reviewing and Articulating Competitive Advantages of Career and Technical Education Programming.

The School Committee completed its periodic evaluation of the Superintendent's accomplishments against established goals and desired qualities established in the DESE Rubric and found him to be Proficient approaching

Exemplary for Standards II Operational Systems and Standard IV Consensus Building; Proficient in Standard III Family Engagement; and Exemplary in Standard I Improved Performance, Effectiveness and Learning; with an Overall Rating of Proficient. The complete record of this evaluation is a public document that will be available at the South Middlesex Regional School District Superintendent's Office.

### **School Improvement Plans**

The School Improvement Plan for the 2019-2020 school year includes the following objectives:

1) Pilot a new model for our Student Response Team, with a focus on broadening the referral process and consistent collaboration of support faculty, 2) Prioritize incorporating the school's core values into student programming and school-wide activities. 3) Academic departments will implement common scoring mechanisms to ensure an equitable student experience and will complete a final curriculum action plan to evaluate the three-year revision and implementation process, 4) Career and Technical Programs will incorporate data analysis of graduation rates, absenteeism/tardiness, Cooperative employment and suspension rates by each department and by grade and teachers within the program will incorporate improvement strategies over last year's results .

The Professional Development Program included a series of workshops hosted by the ELL Department. Topics included: 1) Collaborating with academic, vocational and ELL teachers, 2) Differentiating materials and curriculum for ELLs, 3) Working with Level 1 and Level 2 ELL

students, 4) Working with ELLs and their families, 5) Providing social-emotional support for ELLs, and 6) Working with ELLs in the vocational technical areas (OSHA, safety, related theory). The opening of school for teachers featured a motivational presentation by Brooks Harper. Brooks is a leading speaker in College and Workforce Readiness. He spoke to faculty and staffs about helping students discover, develop, market and sell their talents, skills and abilities that bring tangible value to the marketplace. In the second half of the school year, teachers will attend professional development by Roots and Wings, an organization that will work with students to train them to engage in conversations surrounding climate and culture. The training will culminate in a "Teen Speak Out" Event for students.

### **Handbook**

With review by the School Council, updates to the Handbook were made. A section on academic plagiarism and cheating was included, which detailed the progressive consequences for students in violation of the policy. The number of credits needed was updated from 42.5 to 43.5. There were changes to two programs: Business Technology was deleted and Graphic Communications is for students graduating during the years 2020, 2021, and 2022.

### **The Budget Process**

The Budget Sub-Committee members Ed Burman, Larry Cooper, A.J. Mulvey, Ruth Knowles, Elizabeth Smith-Freedman and Barry Sims are beginning the FY21 budget development process.

In 2019, the Superintendent continued the practice of communicating early in the budget process with the financial officers

of the member towns to develop mutual awareness of both municipal budget constraints and the efforts of the Committee to manage the school efficiently and effectively while recognizing those limitations. The Committee continued to consider reductions in the preliminary budget and the budget of \$19,778,463 as submitted to the member municipalities for FY20 was approved by all.

### **Auditor's Report**

The annual audit by the independent accounting firm of McCarthy & Hargrave is in the process of preparing the financial statements for committee review. It is expected that the audit report that calculates our energy project will meet the stipulated guarantee benchmarks for the 2019-2020 year.

### **Enrollment, Recruiting and Student Retention**

Keefe Regional Technical School is a school of application. Maintaining a healthy enrollment of students for our day school operation is essential for our overall operational success. The Superintendent has indicated that he believes that the quality and rigor of our school programs and the safety and culture of our school environment will lead to our success in attracting students and their families to Keefe Regional Technical School. The Superintendent has emphasized that the administration, faculty and support staff must work together to ensure that Keefe Regional Technical School continues to be recognized by our community as a career and technical school of high quality. In the fall of 2019, our recruitment efforts included a two-hour showcase visit for all 1900 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from the public

schools in our district, followed by an Open House Career Night for prospective students and their families.

We are pleased to report the enrollment on October 1, 2019 was 800 students reflecting a substantial increase in enrollment.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Keefe Regional Technical School has been occupied continuously since September 1973. The facility is used not only during the school day and year but also evenings, weekends, and during the summer months.

Facility upgrades that were completed in 2019 include replacement of auditorium audience seats, replacement of carpeting in the Culinary Program restaurant, the Library, the Auditorium, and the entire 3rd floor classroom corridor, removal of carpeting in several classrooms and replacement with floor tile, replacement of all classroom and shop entrance doorknobs with ADA compliant door levers and hardware, installation of Braille signage to classroom and shop entryways, repairs to parking lot pavement, upgrades/repairs to main boilers/heating system, replacement/addition of furniture and equipment in several classrooms and CTE programs, repair/painting of interior and exterior surfaces, plumbing and electrical upgrades, replacement of interior lighting (lamps and fixtures) through participation in Eversource LED Energy Conservation Upgrade Program, replacement of ductwork insulation in Electrical CTE area, upgrades/repairs to swimming pool complex, installation of football field scoreboard, installation of informational banners on exterior light posts, and the purchase of two 14 passenger minibuses.

Facility projects identified for future consideration include implementing recommended NEASC Visiting Team facility upgrades, replacing boiler in greenhouse, overhauling Broad chiller AC unit, replacing essential vehicles, replacing carpeting in classrooms 201-210, replacing fencing separating shed storage yard and football field, replacing ductwork insulation in Metal Fabrication CTE area, installing a room divider in Dental Assisting CTE area, replacing auditorium stage curtains, replacing auditorium stage lighting system, Horticulture Department design and construction of patio/lunch area outside of cafeteria, replacing custodial cleaning equipment, Carpentry Department design and construction of classroom space inside Carpentry CTE area, installing swimming pool chemical monitoring system, expanding the surveillance system, and replacing the scissor lift platform unit.

### **Student Achievement**

The 2019 Massachusetts Accountability Classification System includes information related to the progress and improvements specific to a series of state-determined targets. This system measures accountability percentiles, graduation rates and participation rates to determine each school's overall performance and classification. Keefe maintains a solid status, labeled as, "moderate progress toward targets."

Keefe continues to focus on closing achievement gaps, while undertaking a new computerized assessment system. Staff and students participated in computer-based testing for the Next Generation Assessment, also known as MCAS 2.0, in English and Math last March and May. An average of 43% of students have "Met" or "Exceeded

Expectations" in English and Math. An average of 62% of students scored "Advanced and Proficient" in Biology. The 2019-2020 school year will be the last year of the Legacy MCAS test for Biology. Starting next school year, 2020-2021, all required state exams, needed for Competency Determination (CD), will be assessed using a computer-based testing system. Additionally, Keefe students showed an increase in growth in the areas of the four-year cohort graduation rate, the annual dropout rate, chronic absenteeism and advanced coursework completion.

Keefe added two additional AP courses, bringing the total to six courses offered in a variety of multidisciplinary areas for students seeking a more rigorous course load. Students who took the College Board AP exams last May continue to perform at a commendable rate. The Advanced Placement participation rate reports that 64 students took a total of 93 AP exams.

Keefe Regional Technical School hosted the SkillsUSA District Level competition on Wednesday, February 7, 2019 and had 115 students compete. Keefe Tech students won a total of 36 medals. Keefe Tech was awarded 5 medals at the State Level. Three students represented Keefe Tech at the National Level. Fourteen Keefe Tech students competed in the Future Farmers of America at the State Level. Twenty-five Keefe Tech students competed in Business Professionals of America at the State Leadership Conference and were awarded 11 First Place Gold Medals, 11 Second Place Silver Medals, and 10 Third Place Bronze Medals. One Keefe Tech student competed at the National Leadership Conference where he was awarded 4 top ten medals and one first-place finish.

### **General Advisory Board**

The General Advisory Committee consists of the Chairperson from each of the Program Advisory Committees. The General Advisory Committee reviews curriculum and equipment requests, summarizes these requests, and brings to the attention of the Administration and the School Committee observations and recommendations from the Program Advisory Committees. The points noted for the current school year include: the need to continually align the curriculum with changes in equipment and technology within specific industries; community outreach to bring Keefe's programs to potential students; increasing opportunities for students and employers through the co-op program; continued pursuit of grant funding for state-of-the-art career and technical equipment; and training students to acquire industry-recognized credentials to help them make the transition from school to work.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jonathan Evans  
Superintendent-Director

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL  
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### **ASHLAND**

Edward Burman - Chairman  
William N. Gaine, Jr.

### **FRAMINGHAM**

Michele Burns  
James Cameau  
Larry Cooper  
Linda Fobes  
Maria Martinez  
A.J. Mulvey  
Michael Rossi

### **HOPKINTON**

Ruth Knowles  
Jaime Shepard

### **HOLLISTON**

Sarah Commerford  
Barry Sims

### **NATICK**

Ruth Mori  
Elizabeth Smith-Freedman